

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00964 131330Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /078 W
-----096357 131332Z /41

O R 131302Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7277
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 964

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: WA, SF, PORG
SUBJ: NAMIBIA: SWAPO ON THE HIGH GROUND

REF: USUN 1946

1. IN CONSIDERING OUR STRATEGY AND TACTICS IN THE WAKE
OF THE ANGOLA RAID, WE WOULD LIKE TO SHARE OUR PERCEPTION
OF SWAPO'S POSITION AND ATTITUDE.

2. THANKS TO THE SAG, SWAPO IS NO LONGER ON THE DEFENSIVE.
THERE IS NO LONGER ANY RESTRAINT ON ITS FREEDOM TO PRO-
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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00964 131330Z

CRASTINATE ABOUT THE WESTERN PROPOSAL. IT WILL USE THE
OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY
INITIATIVE, WHILE SEEKING TO WRING CONCESSIONS
FROM THE FIVE.

3. THOUGH THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF VIEW WITHIN THE
ORGANIZATION, BASICALLY THE SWAPO LEADERSHIP CONSIDERS

TIME TO BE ON THEIR SIDE. GIVEN LIBERTY TO MAKE THE CHOICE, THEY WOULD PROBABLY OPT TO CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE MILITARY PATH TO POWER, IF THEY COULD DO SO WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING SWAPO'S INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT. THUS, HAVING REGAINED THE HIGH GROUND, SWAPO, WHILE PUSHING FOR CONCESSIONS FROM THE FIVE, SEEMS LIKELY TO AIM AT AVOIDING A DEFINITIVE DECISION ON THE WESTERN PROPOSAL FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. IT IS DOUBTFUL SWAPO WILL BE MOVED BY THE PROSPECT OF A CYCLE OF REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE INCREASING IN FREQUENCY AND SCALE. RATHER, THEY WILL ANTICIPATE THE EVENTUAL EXHAUSTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN PATIENCE FOLLOWED BY UNILATERAL ACTIONS INTERNATIONALLY JUSTIFYING SWAPO'S STANCE.

4. THE ONLY WAY TO BRING SWAPO AGAIN TO NEAR ACCEPTANCE OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL IS TO PUT IT ONCE MORE ON THE DEFENSIVE. AND THIS CAN ONLY BE DONE BY RECREATING THE SITUATION IN WHICH SWAPO'S NON-ACCEPTANCE WILL BE WIDELY PERCEIVED AS ALLOWING SOUTH AFRICA TO PROCEED UNILATERALLY IN A RELATIVELY FAVORABLE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT. SUCH A SITUATION WAS SUBSTANTIALLY CREATED IN THE WEEK BEFORE THE ANGOLA RAID BY SAG ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL; ITS RECREATION WILL LIKEWISE DEPEND ON NEW AND EQUALLY DRAMATIC MOVES BY THE SAG.
NELSON

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